Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of the Claims

1. (currently amended)   An instant messaging (IM) system interfaced with a mobile phone network, said IM system comprising:

    a plurality of clients each having IM client applications of one or more client types, the same or different said client types including mobile phone client types having a mobile phone with a unique mobile phone telephone number, and including a plurality of computer network interfaced client types;

    an IM server selectively connected to each of said clients types via a computer network and providing a prescribed range of functionality to said clients;

    each client type of said computer network interfaced clients having a unique identifier to enable access thereto via said computer network; and

    each client having a single account on said IM server for all of its client types that can access said IM server; wherein each of said account is identified by a unique identification number being based on the unique mobile phone telephone number, and wherein said IM server records common to all of the client types of that client; and wherein each said unique identifier of each client type of said client is matched against to said unique identification number of said the particular client;

    wherein said client with a mobile phone is able, through said IM server, to send to or receive from any client type of another client a message, and the another client is identified in said client's mobile phone in relation to the message by the unique identification number.

2. (currently amended)   An instant messaging system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said computer network interfaced client types include clients connected to the IM server via a computer network using via: (i) a PC-based instant messaging client application program; (ii) a GSM device on a GSM network; (iii) (ii) an internet browser-based client application; or (iv) (iii) an email-based client application.

3. (previously presented)   An instant messaging system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said prescribed range of functionality includes: (i) sending a message from one client to another; (ii) receiving a message sent by one client to another; and (iii) identifying which members of a group of clients that a client is a member or prospective member of are currently connected to the computer network, or are probably so connected.

4. (currently amended)   An instant messaging system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said computer network includes is the internet or direct electronic links of computers and other electronic devices.

5. (currently amended)   An instant messaging system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said client types being mobile phone clients connected to the computer network via the GSM network have SMS capability and are initially connected via an SMSC server to control and manage said SMS therebetween, and wherein said SMSC server is directly connected to said IM server via said computer network.

6. (currently amended)   A method for instant messaging between a plurality of clients each having instant messaging (IM) applications of one or more the same or different client types, said client types including mobile phone client types having a mobile phone with a unique mobile phone telephone number, and including a plurality of computer network interfaced client types; said client types being selectively interconnected to an IM server by way of a computer network, whereby each computer network interfaced client type has a unique identifier to enable access thereto via the computer network, the method comprising the following steps:

   providing a single account on the IM server for each client in respect of all of its client types that can access the IM server;

   identifying the account by a unique identification number that is based on the unique mobile phone telephone number, and

   recording in said IM server common to all of the client types of that client; and matching each unique identifier of each client type of that client matched against to said unique identification number thereof;

wherein said client with a mobile phone is able, through said IM server, to send to or receive from any client type of another client a message, and the another client is identified in said client's mobile phone in relation to the message by the unique identification number.

7. (canceled)

8. (canceled)

9. (canceled)

10. (previously presented)   An instant messaging system as claimed in claim 3, wherein said prescribed range of functionality further includes replying to the sender client of a received message by reference to the sender client's unique identification number.

11. (currently amended)   An IM server for use in an instant messaging system comprising a plurality of clients having IM client applications of <u>one or more</u> ~~the same or~~ different <u>client types, said client types including mobile phone client types having a mobile phone with a unique mobile phone telephone number, and including a plurality of computer network interfaced client types,</u> and where each <u>computer network interfaced</u> client type has a unique identifier to enable access thereto via said computer network, said IM server <u>being</u> selectively connected to each of said clients ~~via a computer network~~ and providing a prescribed range of functionality to said clients and wherein said IM server stores a single account for each client, said single account being in respect of all of the client's client types that can access said IM server and identifiable by a unique identification number <u>being based on the unique mobile phone telephone number, and wherein said IM server records each said unique identifier of each client type of said client matched against said unique identification number</u> ~~common to all of the client types~~ <u>of said client; wherein said client with a mobile phone is able, through said IM server, to send to or receive from any client type of another client a message, and the another client is identified in said client's mobile phone in relation to the message by the unique identification number.</u>

12. (canceled)

13. (currently amended)   A computer readable medium containing executable software for operating an instant messaging system as ~~described~~ claimed in claim 1.

14. (new)   An instant messaging system as claimed in claim 1 wherein said IM server is adapted to assign said unique identification number to a user of said computer network interfaced client.